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ABSTRACT

Each spring, the previous year's graduates of Prince George's Community College (PGCC) are surveyed. These surveys serve as the major source of information about transfer rates and the further educational experiences of PGCC's graduates. The graduate survey conducted in fiscal year 1987 revealed that: (1) 49% of the 521 survey respondents had taken at least one course at another college or university since leaving PGCC; (2) 78% of the students who had transferred were enrolled in programs related to their PGCC studies, and 88% intended to earn a degree at their transfer institution; (3) the most popular transfer school was the University of Maryland's University College; (4) 84% of the respondents said their PGCC preparation for transfer was "very good" or "good"; (5) PGCC's faculty, administrative procedures, and counseling services were rated better than those of the other colleges attended; (6) in 1987, a higher percentage (i.e., 49%) of PGCC graduates transferred to a four-year college or university than in any other year during the 1980s; (7) information systems and computer science graduates transfered at a higher rate than other program graduates; and (8) 75% of the PGCC graduates in the class of 1986 who had planned to transfer succeeded in doing so within a year of their PGCC graduation. (AJL)

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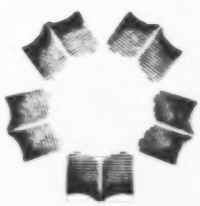

PRINCE GEORGE'S
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

Research Brief RB89-4
October 1988

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Office of Institutional Research and Analysis

GRADUATE TRANSFER
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Introduction

Half of the students attending the community college for credit say their main goal is to prepare for transfer to a four-year college or university. The bachelor's degree is their goal; many do not plan to earn the A.A. degree. For example, thirty-five percent of the students entering PGCC in fall 1987 said they intended to transfer without earning an award from the community college. Among former PGCC students enrolled at the University of Maryland College Park in fall 1987, less than 30 percent had transferred 60 or more credits. The average number of credits transferred to UMCP by former PGCC students was 43.

Despite the fact that most PGCC students who transfer do so without first completing their community college program, enough graduate first to warrant analysis. The opinions of community college graduates who transfer provide valuable feedback since they have completed the entire PGCC curriculum.

Methodology

Information on the continuing education experiences of PGCC graduates comes primarily from alumni surveys conducted each year by the office of institutional research and analysis. Graduates are surveyed in the spring following their year of graduation. Graduates of even-numbered years are surveyed using a questionnaire designed by the Maryland Community College Research Group and administered statewide under coordination by the State Board for Community Colleges.

Transfer programs at the college are designed to provide university-parallel coursework for transfer to four-year institutions for further study. The programs are articulated with the University of Maryland and other universities. One outcomes measure for evaluating such programs is the percentage of graduates who have transferred within a year of PGCC graduation. This indicator is presented for the college's six transfer programs for each graduating class over the 1980-87 period. For this trend analysis, both full- and part-time transfer students are included. In addition, transfer goal achievement rates (the percentage of transfers of those whose primary reason for attending the community college was to prepare for transfer) are compared with four peer colleges. Finally,

graduate ratings of the quality of their community college preparation for transfer, using a five-point scale (very good, good, fair, poor, very poor), are presented.

Most Recent Outcomes Indicators

The survey of FY87 graduates provides the most recent information on the transfer experiences of PGCC graduates. Slightly less than half of the 521 respondents answering the continuing education question had taken at least one course at another college or university since graduating from PGCC. More had continued on a part-time than full-time basis:

Continuing Education Status of FY87 PGCC Graduates

	Number	Percent
Full-time	116	22%
Part-time	141	27%
Not continuing	264	51%
Total respondents	521	100%

Seventy-eight percent of the students who had transferred were enrolled in programs related to their community college studies. Eighty-eight percent intended to earn a degree at their transfer school; five percent were not sure and seven percent were not degree-seeking. The most popular transfer school was the University of Maryland University College, with the University of Maryland College Park a close second:

Transfer Institutions, FY87 PGCC Graduates

University of Maryland University College	107
University of Maryland College Park	86
Bowie State University	13
Towson State University	7
Capitol College	5
Frostburg State University	4
George Washington University	4
Old Dominion University	2
Salisbury State University	2
St. Mary's College of Maryland	2
University of the District of Columbia	2
Others	23

As expected, graduates of transfer programs were more likely to transfer than graduates of occupational programs:

Continuing Education Status of FY87 PGCC Graduates
by Type of Program Completed at PGCC

	Respondents	Continuing Education Number	Percent
Transfer programs	144	118	82%
Occupational A.A.	353	135	38%
Certificates	24	4	17%
Total	521	257	49%

Even among transfer programs, the proportion of graduates transferring within one year of their community college graduation varied somewhat. Eight of the nine Information Systems and Computer Sciences graduates transferred, yielding the highest transfer rate, 89 percent. General Studies graduates transferred at an unusually high rate, with over 85 percent having taken a class at another college since graduating from PGCC. The lowest rate of transfer among the college's transfer program graduates was found in Teacher Education, 69 percent:

Percent of Transfer Program Graduates Continuing Education
Respondents to FY87 Graduate Survey

	Total Respondents	Continuing Education Full-Time	Part-Time	Total	Percent
Information Systems and Computer Sciences	9	4	4	8	89%
General Studies	62	30	23	53	85%
Engineering	6	4	1	5	83%
Business Administration	41	26	7	33	80%
Arts and Sciences	10	7	1	8	80%
Teacher Education	16	4	7	11	69%
Total Transfer Programs	144	75	43	118	82%

The graduates were asked to rate how well their studies at PGCC prepared them for transfer. Eighty-four percent of the responding graduates said their community college preparation for transfer was "very good" or "good." Graduates continuing their studies in a field related to their PGCC major were more likely to rate their preparation highly:

FY87 Graduate Ratings of PGCC Transfer Preparation

	Total Respondents (N = 252)	Program Related (N = 201)	Program Not Related (N = 51)
Very Good	40%	42%	31%
Good	44%	43%	47%
Fair	13%	12%	13%
Poor	3%	2%	6%
Very Poor	<1%	<1%	0%

Graduates who had attended another college or university since leaving PGCC were asked to rate both colleges on five attributes: teaching faculty, counseling and advisement, academic standards, administrative procedures, and student activities. The ratings were on a five point scale from very good to very poor. For the following analysis, responses were assigned from one to five points (5 points for "very good," 4 points for "good," etc.). The higher the score, the more favorable the rating. Weighted averages for the five attributes for PGCC and the "other college" were as follows:

FY87 Graduate Ratings of College Attributes
PGCC and Other College Attended

	PGCC	Other College
Teaching Faculty	4.48	4.02
Administrative procedures	4.32	3.50
Academic standards	4.21	4.22
Counseling and advisement	4.07	3.57
Student activities	3.84	3.81

PGCC's teaching faculty received the highest average ratings, notably above the average for the other colleges attended. In addition to faculty, PGCC's administrative procedures and counseling and advising services received higher average ratings than the averages for the other colleges attended by PGCC graduates. Academic standards and student activities at PGCC and the other college were given, on average, similar ratings.

Time Series and Peer College Comparisons

A higher percentage of PGCC's graduates transferred to a four-year college or university in 1987 than in any other year during the 1980's. At 49 percent, the overall transfer rate was three percentage points above the previous high of the decade (46 percent for the class of 1985):

Percent of Graduate Respondents Transferred
to Senior Institutions, Classes of 1980-87

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Total respondents	44% (584)	42% (579)	45% (458)	40% (415)	45% (572)	46% (597)	38% (484)	49% (521)
Transfer prog.	66% (186)	67% (177)	65% (172)	67% (76)	72% (166)	71% (142)	67% (142)	82% (144)
Occup. programs	34% (398)	32% (402)	33% (286)	34% (339)	34% (406)	38% (455)	28% (342)	37% (377)

SOURCE: Surveys conducted one year after graduation. Includes A.A. and certificate graduates who transferred to a four-year college or university, full- or part-time. Transfer and occupational program refers to PGCC graduating curricula. Figures in parentheses are total respondents answering the transfer question.

As indicated in the above table, the proportion of graduates from PGCC transfer programs that had transferred within a year of their community college commencement increased substantially in 1987. From only two-thirds the year before, the proportion of transfer program graduates continuing their education jumped to four-fifths. Analysis of the transfer rates by program revealed that much of this increase reflected a larger share of General Studies graduates transferring. (While the college's general studies curriculum serves students unsure of their major, it is also a flexible transfer program allowing students to select coursework suitable for baccalaureate majors with no PGCC analogue.) Eighty-five percent of the FY87 General Studies graduates responding to the alumni survey had taken classes at another college since leaving PGCC. The next highest transfer rate for General Studies graduates during the 1980's was 70 percent. Transfer rates for each of the college's six transfer programs for each year during this decade are shown on the next two pages.

Graduate Respondents Transferred to Senior Institutions Within One Year of PGCC Graduation
Graduating Classes of 1980-84

Program	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Arts and Sciences	**67%** (27)	**44%** (27)	**65%** (23)	**64%** (11)	**63%** (16)
Business Administration	**82%** (39)	**81%** (48)	**80%** (35)	**94%** (18)	**89%** (36)
Engineering	**100%** (1)	**80%** (5)	**100%** (4)	**100%** (3)	**75%** (8)
General Studies	**58%** (103)	**67%** (85)	**53%** (81)	**59%** (39)	**70%** (80)
Information Systems and Computer Sciences	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Teacher Education	**75%** (16)	**50%** (12)	**64%** (28)	**50%** (8)	**50%** (24)

Graduate Respondents Transferred to Senior Institutions Within One Year of PGCC Graduation
Graduating Classes of 1985-87

Program	1985	1986	1987
Arts and Sciences	62% (21)	50% (6)	80% (10)
Business Administration	82% (33)	82% (28)	80% (41)
Engineering	67% (6)	100% (4)	83% (6)
General Studies	70% (70)	60% (77)	85% (62)
Information Systems and Computer Sciences	NA	70% (10)	89% (9)
Teacher Education	53% (17)	53% (17)	69% (16)

SOURCE: Institutional Research annual graduate surveys. Percentages reflect total graduates who had transferred to a four-year college or university within a year of PGCC graduation. Figures in parentheses are total respondents.

Much of the analysis presented above examined the experiences of graduates of transfer-oriented programs. For a variety of reasons, students in occupational programs may end up transferring. Nearly two-fifths of the FY87 graduates of occupational degree programs had continued their studies when surveyed a year later. Over half of the FY87 graduates in Marketing Management, Computer Technology, and Accounting had transferred. An alternative to analyzing transfer by PGCC program type is to examine transfer goal achievement: what proportion of the graduates who said their primary goal in attending the community college was to prepare for transfer achieved that goal? The questionnaire used in the statewide surveys of alumni from even-numbered years includes items designed to answer this question. The percentage of graduates achieving their transfer goal for PGCC and four peer colleges is reported for the last four statewide surveys in the following table:

Graduate Transfer Goal Achievement
Peer College Comparison

	1980	1982	1984	1986
Prince George's Comm. College	79%	78%	72%	75%
Anne Arundel Comm. College	81%	76%	79%	73%
Catonsville Comm. College	78%	82%	73%	76%
Essex Community College	75%	82%	84%	79%
Montgomery Comm. College	81%	81%	77%	77%
All Maryland comm. colleges	78%	78%	75%	76%

SOURCE: Surveys conducted one year after graduation. Figures are proportion of graduates who had a goal to prepare for transfer who reported having transferred.

Three-fourths of the PGCC graduates of the Class of 1986 who had transfer as their goal had succeeded in transferring within a year of their PGCC graduation. This was similar to the statewide rate, and an improvement over the rate reported two years earlier. The transfer goal achievement of 72 percent reported by PGCC's graduates of 1984 was the lowest among all five colleges over the study period.

Graduates in the statewide survey of 1986 graduates were also asked to rate their transfer preparation using the same five-point scale described above ("very good" to "very poor"). The percentage of PGCC respondents rating their preparation "very good" or "good" matched the statewide average but was slightly less than that of the four peer colleges:

FY86 Graduate Ratings of Transfer Preparation
Percent Rating Preparation Very Good or Good

Prince George's Community College	78%
Anne Arundel Community College	81%
Catonsville Community College	80%
Essex Community College	79%
Montgomery Community College	79%
All Maryland community colleges	78%

Summary

Information describing the transfer experiences of PGCC graduates complements the analysis of all transfers, including those who transfer without completing their community college program. A review of graduate experiences provides a better means of evaluating the curricula associated with transfer programs at the community college.

The most recent information, for the graduates of 1987, revealed a decade-high rate of transfer. Nearly half of all respondents to the 1987 alumni survey had taken classes at another college or university since their PGCC graduation. Eighty-two percent of those completing transfer-oriented programs at PGCC had transferred within a year of graduating, another high. The University of Maryland's University College and College Park campuses were the destinations for over three-fourths of PGCC's graduate transfers.

PGCC's FY87 graduates rated their community college preparation for transfer highly; 84 percent rated it "very good" or "good" on a five-point scale. When asked to compare five attributes of PGCC against the other college they had attended, PGCC graduates rated the community college's faculty, administrative procedures, and counseling services better. The respondents, on average, reported little differences in academic standards and student activities.

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